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ABSTRACT

In October 1993, the Trumbull Campus of Kent State University (KSU), in Ohio, conducted a survey of all 123 graduates from spring 1993 to determine employment outcomes and graduates' assessment of campus academic programs, services, and overall environment. Study results, based on responses from 67% (n=86) of the graduates, included the following: (1) 47 of the graduates were female and 82 were Caucasian; (2) 76% were currently employed, with 53 graduates employed full-time and 12 employed part-time; (3) 42% indicated that their job was very related to their area of study, 22% that it was somewhat related, and 36% that it was in an area not related to their studies; (4) 44 graduates were continuing their education, with 40 pursuing bachelor's degrees, 4 pursuing associate degrees, 28 attending full-time, and 16 attending part-time; (5) students reported taking an average of 3.95 years to graduate from Kent Trumbull; (6) with respect to graduates' assessment of campus services, graduation services were rated the highest at 3.32 out of 4, followed by student records at 3.30 and teaching quality at 3.24; (7) the lowest rated services were advising at 2.51, student activities at 2.74, and career planning at 2.79; and (8) respondents gave the campus an overall rating of 8.08 on a 10-point scale. Based on student comments, it was recommended that the campus improve academic advising through better training and management, develop strategies for dealing with s' ess among student records staff, place more emphasis on job placement, and expand evening and weekend course offerings. (Includes student comments and a list of employment positions and employers.) (KP)

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Survey Results of 1993 Graduates

Kent State University Trumbull Campus

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SURVEY RESULTS OF 1993 GRADUATES

Graduates are one of the best resources for assessing campus academic programs, services, and the overall campus environment. Graduates of campus academic programs are, in a sense, customers who have received services from the campus over an extended period of time and received a final product. As such, graduates can provide us with valuable direction for improving our operations.

In May of 1993 the Kent State University Trumbull campus graduated 123 students. In October 1993, a nine-item survey was sent to each of the graduates. The survey asked students to provide specific information regarding employment, as well as soliciting student responses assessing campus services and academic programs.

Of the 123 1993 Kent Trumbull graduates who were mailed surveys, 29 were completed and returned. An attempt was made to survey the remaining population by telephone. An additional 57 graduates completed telephone surveys, bringing the total number of completed surveys to 86; representing 67% of the total number of 1993 Kent Trumbull graduates.

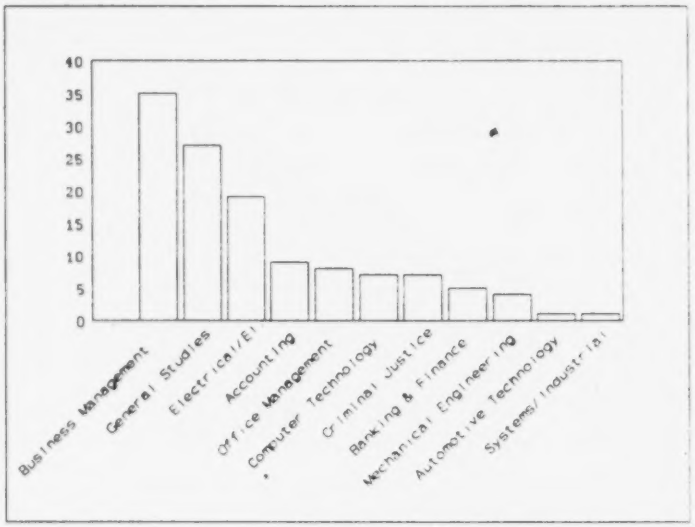

Figure 1 *Majors of 1993 Kent Trumbull graduates*

The gender and ethnic/racial identification of the eighty-six graduates responding to the survey is reported as:

Gender		Ethnic/Race	
Female	47	Caucasian	82
Male	39	African American	4

BELOW ARE THE RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT SURVEY

ARE YOU CURRENTLY EMPLOYED? Full-time/Part-time?

Sixty-five of the 86 or 76% indicated they were employed.
Fifty-three..... full time.
Twelve..... part time.

IS YOUR EMPLOYMENT RELATED TO YOUR KENT TRUMBULL AREA OF STUDY?

Forty-two percent of graduates surveyed reported their technical area of study was **very related to their job.**

Twenty-two percent of graduates surveyed reported their technical area of study was **somewhat related to their current job.**

Thirty-six percent of graduates surveyed reported their technical area of study was **not related to their current job.**

The responses to the inquiry of relevance of technical areas of study should be looked at in light of the number of graduates who indicated that they were continuing their education. (See attachment for a list of employment positions reported for those graduates indicating that their technical area of study was not relevant to their current employment.)

For many of the 1993 graduates who are continuing their education, their current employment is temporary, and serves only to support them while they are continuing toward a bachelors degree. Consequently, the current jobs of graduates who are going on to school quite often are not in their chosen field.

ARE YOU CURRENTLY CONTINUING YOUR EDUCATION? If Yes, what institution, how many courses, what degree program?

Forty-four of 1993 Kent Trumbull graduates surveyed reported continuing their education.

Forty pursuing bachelors degrees,
Four pursuing associate degrees.

Twenty-eight .....attending full-time
Sixteen .....attending part-time.

GRADUATES WERE ASKED TO IDENTIFY THE INSTITUTION IN WHICH THEY ARE CONTINUING THEIR EDUCATION.

The following is a breakdown of those institutions.

Thirty-four the Kent State University system.

22 at the Kent Campus
12 at the Trumbull Campus

Seven graduates indicated continuing at Youngstown State University

The remaining five graduates identified the following institutions as were they are continuing

University of Missouri at Kansas City
Hiram
University of Akron
National Institute of Mass.Therapy
Stark Technical College

NOTE: The total of this section equals 46 students instead of 44 because two students are attending more than one campus.

GRADUATES REPORTED CONTINUING THEIR EDUCATION IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Business Administration
Anthropology
Psychology
General Studies
Biology
Human Services Technology
Industrial Technology
Mechanical Engineering
Massage Theory
Communications
Electrical Engineering
Accounting
Business Management
Computer Science
Nursing
Education

GRADUATES WERE ASKED TO COMMENT ON WHY THEY WERE CONTINUING THEIR EDUCATION AT AN INSTITUTION OTHER THAN KENT STATE UNIVERSITY.

The following were their comments:

> **YSU is closer for me to commute to than Kent Main. If Kent Trumbull had a Bachelor program then I would stay at Kent Trumbull.**
>
> **Closer to my home.**
>
> **I am currently attending Kent Trumbull for 6 hrs and Kent main for 9 hours. I honestly prefer to take all my classes at Trumbull, the atmosphere is much more pleasant and friendly. I will be attending Trumbull again in the Spring '94 for 6 hrs.**
>
> **Even though I am here, I probably won't finish at Kent, because of what the main campus will not accept. I feel that all Kent is doing is taking more money from me the customer, and others.**
>
> **Eastern Michigan - Closer to birthplace/price lower.**
>
> **For the technical classes; another institution will accept more of my classes.**
>
> **Location of Y.S.U. is closer to job. Going to Y.S.U. Is more convenient in traveling.**
>
> **Y.S.U. location is closer to home.**
>
> **Hiram has a weekend college and it has a better curriculum.**
>
> **Kent's Bachelor degree in Engineering Technology emphasizes business and management. YSU emphasizes hands-on engineering.**

<u>HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO COMPLETE YOUR DEGREE FROM START TO FINISH?</u>

Students reported taking an average of 3.95 years to graduate from Kent Trumbull. Surveyed graduates reported the following:

- **(10) or 12% completed in two years.**
- **(35) or 43% completed in three years.**
- **(10) or 12% completed in four years.**
- **(11) or 13% completed in five years**

Sixty-one (80%) of those 1993 graduates surveyed completed in 5 years or less to graduate.

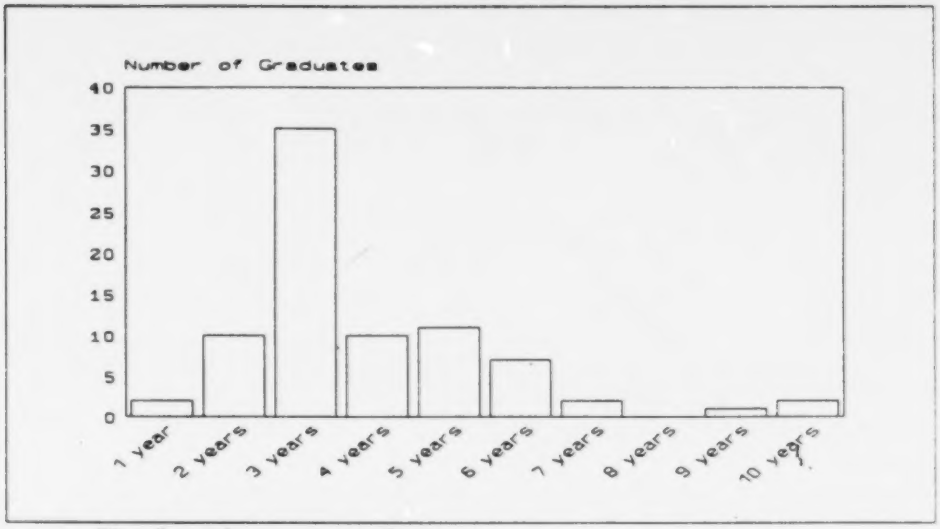

Figure 2. *Number of years to graduate*

STUDENTS WERE ASKED TO RATE CAMPUS SERVICES AND FUNCTIONS USING THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

Note: The students responding did not always rate each of the services listed.

The information below reflects the information that we received in each of the categories.

1 = POOR 2 = AVERAGE 3 = GOOD 4 = EXCELLENT

Registration
1 = 3 2 = 7 3 = 45 4 = 30 average rating 3.16

Advising
1 = 11 2 = 18 3 = 31 4 = 19 average rating 2.51

Student Activities
1 = 4 2 = 11 3 = 21 4 = 2 average rating 2.74

Student records
1 = 4 2 = 5 3 = 44 4 = 28 average rating 3.30

Career Planning
1 = 4 2 = 13 3 =14 4 = 6 average rating 2.79

Graduation
1 = 1 2 = 3 3 = 34 4 = 22 average rating 3.32

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Program curriculum
1 = 1 2 = 10 3 = 50 4 = 24 average rating 3.10

Teaching quality
1 = 2 2 = 7 3 = 41 4 = 35 average rating 3.24

Course availability
1 = 8 2 = 18 3 = 39 4 = 20 average rating 2.80

Course content
1 = 1 2 = 10 3 = 55 4 = 18 average rating 3.00

OVERALL CAMPUS RATING ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10 (1 = POOR 10 = EXCELLENT):

5 = 2 6 = 4 7 = 15 8 = 42 9 = 14 10 = 8

AVERAGE OVERALL RATING 8.08

Demographic Data

The following is a demographic data of the total 123 graduates:

GENDER
Female.....54*
Male.....42*

AGES

18 to 24 years	26 to 35	36 & older
36	54	33

***Not all graduates reported ages**

Ethnic/Racial

Caucasian 116
African American.....6
Asian/Pacific 1

Marital Status

Single..... 80
Married..... 43

JOBS HELD BY GRADUATES WHO INDICATED THEIR TECHNICAL AREA OF STUDY WAS NOT RELEVANT TO THEIR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT:

Sportirg Goods Sales Clerk
Waiter
Engineering Consultant
Tutor in Skill Center & Librarian
Work in the auto lab
Toll Booth operator
High school basketball coach
Secretary.
Billing clerk
Warehouse worker
Sales.
Computer operator.
Construction Laborer
Computer terminal operator
Metal cleaner
Assistant Greens Keeper
Prep Cook
Waiter

AREAS IN WHICH STUDENTS RECEIVED DEGREES FROM KENT TRUMBULL IN 1993:

27 General Studies
35 Business Management Tech.
19 Electrical/El. Engineering
9 Accounting Technology
8 Office Management
7 Criminal Justice
7 Computer Technology
5 Banking and Finance Tech
4 Mechanical Engineering/Intg
1 Automotive Technology
1 Systems/Industrial Eng. Tech.

EMPLOYMENT POSITIONS REPORTED BY 1993 GRADUATES

SERVICE:

Sporting Goods Sales Clerk
Customer Service Representative
Waiter
Toll Booth Operator
County Supervisor
Assistant Manger of Food Store
Park Ranger
Assistant Greens Keeper
Prep Cook
Clerk/Cashier
Salesman
Cook

MEDICAL:

Research & Development Lab
Technician Bio-Med Industry
Nurses Aid
Physical Therapy Transporter
Registered Nurse

EDUCATION:

Tutor in Skill Center
Work in the Auto Lab
Admissions Counselor

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION:

Secretary
Office Manager
Billing Clerk
Security Guard
Secretary
Indirect Lending
Insurance Agent
Computer Terminal Operator
Receptionist
Data Assistant
Assistant Manager
Executive Assistant
Accounting Trainee
Senior Purchasing Expeditor
Accountant
Services Management Information Clerk
Administrative Secretary
Tax Counselor

TECHNICAL TRADES\INDUSTRY

Industrial Engineer
Electrician
Master Tool and Dye Maker
Accounting
Electronic Technician
Senior Design Engineer
Engineering Consultant
Carpenter
Plumber
Senior Scheduler
Assembly-line person
Warehouse Worker
Construction Laborer
Cleans Metal

COMPANIES EMPLOYING KENT TRUMBULL 1993 GRADUATES

AAA Bridge Construction
AIM Leasing
ALSI Food Stores
Ashtabula County Sheriff's Department
Bank One
BP Car Wash
Child Support Agency
Copperweld Steel
Dr. Games'
E. Data Systems
E.J. Thomas-Arts Hall of Akron
First Federal Savings & Loan
Fred Mott CPA Inc.
General Motors Charles Court
H & R Block
Heller Bureau
Honey Creek Farms
Johnson Rubber
Johnsonite
K-Mart
Kent Trumbull Campus
Kraftmaid Cabinetry
Leo's Ristorante
Lil' Tikes Inc.
Mahoning County Chamber of Commerce
Mary Och Learning Center
Matthews Local Board of Education
Metalworking International Corporation
Metropolitan Life Insurance
Musia Leasing Inc.
NEOSERRC
New Environment Inc.
Newton Falls High School
Norfield Shell Auto Care
Omega Education Services
Packard Electric
Peerless-Winsmith
Perkins Family Restaurant
Private Industry Council
Ranco Distributors
Ravenna City Schools
Red Lobster
Roby Lees
Rogers Construction
SINARAPAC
Space Center
St. Joseph Riverside Hospital
Steel Co.
Tavern By the Green
Taylor Winfield Corporation
Triad
Trumbull Memorial Hospital
Trumbull County Treasurer's Office
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Warren Public Library
Warren Radiologists

Each of the comments made by surveyed graduates are listed below. It is important for us to take each of these comments seriously as representing opinions, perceptions and ideas from those "customers" who have a particularly good view of the campus and its operations. More than likely, we have heard many of these comments before; and we can add strength to the validity of these comments. The key is to take positive action on each of these comments.

Often we as educators respond badly to criticisms of our efforts. Of course, the typical responses are to react defensively; mounting a counter attack to explain away the remarks, or we devalue the input and those who are giving it. Whatever the reaction, the result has been the same: Little Change. We should never neglect an opportunity to improve.

Look at these comments from our graduates for what they can be: Information that offers us direction for improvement.

COMMENTS OF 1993 KENT TRUMBULL GRADUATES

ON OFFERING A BACHELOR'S DEGREE:

Students would continue if they could get a bachelor's degree at Kent Trumbull.

Establish a four-year business degree.

ADVISING:

Advisors don't keep their appointments with students. They should call students if they can't keep their appointments.

Kent Trumbull guaranteed me a 2 plus 2 program; however I had to repeat four classes because of my advisor's errors.

Advisors suggested classes that I did not need to take for my degree.

Better advising. I had two appointments and the advisor didn't show.

Advisors don't keep appointments with students.

I went through three advisors before I could have my major changed. Advisors were poor in giving direction, and there was no follow-up.

Kent needs more advisors who know what they're doing.

Advisors need to supply more information for academic honors eligibility.

Advisors advise students of courses that are not necessary. I have spoken with many students who feel the same way.

The advising needs to be more in tune with students needs. They need to prepare students for upper-division work.

Advisors needs to give students more information on available degrees.

TEACHING:

More qualified teachers in the Electrical Field.

Screen part-time instructors more closely.

Some teachers are available for help and the others are not.

There is poor class structure because of unskilled instructors.

Lotus and WordPerfect need to be taught in more depth.

The evening professors were not challenging.

SCHEDULING:

We need more classes on the weekend.

Kent's curriculum is generic and boring as far as the basic classes like history, etc.

Schedule classes more feasible for people who work during the day instead of 3:30 classes; 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. would be better.

Course availability in my degree was poor. Courses should be offered more than once a year.

Programs should be offered in the morning and evening hours so more

students can take advantage of them.

More course offerings in the evenings.

The student should be made fully aware if there is any possibility that courses won't carry to a four-year degree. This is absurd!!!!

More LER's should be offered in the morning.

IERT courses were hard to schedule because they were all grouped together.

I was happier at the Geauga Campus because I could schedule my accounting classes all in one night rather than going to Kent Trumbull for four nights a week.

More courses available for technical programs.

The GM program prevents students from taking certain courses.

Don't overlap courses.

SERVICES:

Kent Trumbull needs more centralized record keeping. Good customer service depends on the staff and it is at times terrible, especially in student services. We deserve better treatment for the money we pay; there needs to be in general a better attitude on the Campus towards students.

More classes should transfer without having to be retaken from technologies to business. I was advised to take courses and then had to retake them at the Kent Campus.

More attention to job placement.

Stock labs with necessary materials.

More lighting in the parking lots for evening students.

The parking lot in winter needs more attention with salt to particular icy spots.

Lower prices.

Student records gave me the run-around. They lost my records and I could not apply for a job.

Student records said I was not eligible for a refund from grants; I persisted and ended up getting a refund.

Kent Trumbull needs better communication with the other campuses in the Kent system regarding records transferability, and scheduling.

Skill Center needs more help.

Kent Trumbull is VERY unorganized in the student affairs department. People were running around everywhere due to lack of computers and not enough competent people to handle the counter.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STUDENT COMMENTS

From the comments of our graduates, it is apparent that several areas of the campus operation are seen as needing improvement. The most commented on area was <u>academic advising.</u> The comments reflect the graduates' realization of the importance of consistent, informed, academic advising. The comments indicate the need for the following focus for our academic advising efforts:

1. **<u>Comprehensive</u> training for both faculty and staff advisors**

2. **Continuous academic advising up-dates for faculty and staff advisors**

3. **Close coordination of staff advising appointments**

4. **Continuous review of our advising efforts through student surveys, interviews; and records and schedule reviews.**

5. **Clearer explanations of courses need to be given to students. The more specific explanation of course objectives, the more realistic the student's expectations; which means the less frequency students feel their expectations are not being met.**

These comments do not reflect an analysis of our current advising efforts. These remarks are intended to assist in providing definition and direction for improvement in our practice.

In the area of teaching, graduates also had some specific comments. Several of the comments about teaching referred to part-time instructors. The comments suggest the need for a more comprehensive screening of part-time faculty candidates combined with a thorough assessment of part-time instructors' teaching quality.

In the areas of service, students had both specific and general comments. These comments reflect perceptions as well as actual experienced service problems. Student Records received several of the most pointed comments. These comments ranged from general statements about disorganization to specific ones about the lack of communication with other campuses. Several suggestions based on student comments of Student Records are:

- Develop strategies to address stress among staff. Continuous monitoring of the stress level of staff during peek times.

- Continual staff training updates - focusing on cross-training of responsibilities to increase the ability to rotate staff.

Other areas mentioned in the graduates' comments that indicate a need for investigation:

- Lighting in the parking lots.
- Necessary lab materials are not available.
- Career Planning should give more attention to job placement.

The issue of difficulty of transferring coursework to the Kent campus from the school of Technology was mentioned by a number of students.

Scheduling was another area graduates mentioned as a problem. The comments ranged from:

- Classes should be offered at 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. for students who work.
- Course availability: Courses should be offered more than once a year.
- Offer more courses in the evenings and weekends.

- Offer more LER's in the morning.

- IERT courses were hard to schedule because they were all grouped together.
- Don't overlap courses.

As we know, course scheduling and the availability of classes leave a lasting impression on students. Every effort should continue to be made to incorporate what feedback we get from our students into our scheduling process.

This survey of 1993 graduates offers us glimpses of how we are perceived by students who have been here long enough to know. The perceptions of our students give us direction for changing the patterns of our operations, generating ideas for improvement, and being more responsive to the needs of our students. The challenge for us is to respond constructively to these challenges.